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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 086139

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL ARF EAID MARR

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE REQUEST: INVITING ARF MEMBERS TO SEPT 16-18 ARF
DISASTER RELIEF DIALOGUE

¶11. (U) This is an ACTION REQUEST for Embassies BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, BEIJING, CANBERRA, COLOMBO, DILI, DHAKA, HANOI, ISLAMABAD, JAKARTA, KUALA LUMPUR, MANILA, MOSCOW, NEW DELHI, OTTAWA, PORT MORESBY, PHNOM PENH, SEOUL, SINGAPORE, TOKYO, ULAANBATTAR, USEU BRUSSELS, VIENTIANE, and WELLINGTON. These host governments are all members of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). (Note: While Burma and DPRK are ARF members, they are not included in this invitation.)

SUMMARY

¶12. (U) The United States, along with the Thailand co-chair, will host ARF's annual policy dialogue on disaster relief cooperation. This meeting, the 9th Inter-Sessional Meeting on Disaster Relief (ISM-DR), will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii on September 16-18. The Department requests all posts named in para 1 to deliver the meeting materials, invite the host government to send interagency officials, and inform host governments in developing countries of funding availability.

OBJECTIVES

¶13. (U) Department requests posts to pursue the following objectives:

-- Deliver the package of invitation materials to appropriate host government officials handling ARF matters. See para 7 for information on accessing these materials.

-- Invite them to nominate a wide range of civilian and military policy and perhaps legal officials from their interagency offices. See para 5 for further background on the desired host government representation at the ISM-DR.

-- Coordinate as appropriate with U.S. Embassy Defense Attaché or Defense Cooperation offices to raise awareness of the event within host government military agencies.

-- Inform developing ARF countries of the limited availability of funding for officials' travel expenses. Embassies in developing ARF countries include COLOMBO, DILI, DHAKA, HANOI, ISLAMABAD, JAKARTA, MANILA, PORT MORESBY, PHNOM PENH, ULAANBATTAR, and VIENTIANE. Posts should inform the Department of requests by August 28. See para 6 for Embassy and host government procedures for requesting and receiving funding assistance.

BACKGROUND

¶14. (U) The United States and Thailand are serving as co-chairs of disaster relief cooperation in ARF. The September 16-18 ISM-DR in Honolulu will advance a number of key disaster relief initiatives undertaken by ARF. In addition to a plenary discussion of civil-military coordination issues involved with relief operations, the ISM-DR will also establish Breakout Groups to advance these key initiatives. Each Breakout Group will be led by one or more

facilitators and will report back to the full ARF plenary the results of their discussions and recommendations for next steps. Breakout Groups will be established in the following areas:

- Improving Coordination among Regional Fora for Disaster Relief Capacity-Building Efforts
- Voluntary "Model Arrangement" for the Use of Foreign Militarcy and Civil Defense Assets in Disaster Relief
- Strategic Guidance for Humanitarian Assistance Operations
- ARF Disaster Relief Work Plan
- Future ARF Disaster Relief Exercise Planning Discussions

(If needed, further explanation of each Breakout Group is given in the Annotated Agenda.)

15. (U) DESIRED HOST GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION: The U.S. and Thai co-chairs hope that ARF countries will send a wide range of civilian and military officials to the ISM-DR. In particular, host governments should attempt to pattern their own representation around staffing the various Breakout Groups. Some of these Breakout Groups will be occurring simultaneously. This requires multiple, capable delegates from each ARF country to be represented if that ARF country has a particular interest in the initiative. While presumably some countries may not be able to field one or more delegates for each breakout group, the co-chairs hope delegates include:

- disaster relief policy officials from foreign affairs, national

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disaster management/relief organizations, or defense agencies,
-- policy officials dealing with regional humanitarian assistance and disaster relief capacity-building efforts like ARF, ASEAN, APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), or SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation)

-- exercise planning officials from civilian or defense institutions (perhaps including those involved in planning for the May 2009 ARF disaster relief exercise in the Philippines)

-- legal and/or policy officials equipped to discuss and negotiate the "Model Arrangement" text.

16. (U) PROCEDURES FOR FUNDING ASSISTANCE: The Department, along with U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), has a limited funding available to cover the travel costs of host government civilian and military officials. No later than August 28, post should forward any requests for funding assistance to the EAP/RSP POC listed in para 7. Posts should include the officials' names, agencies, a brief rationale or recommendation for their attendance, and an estimate of travel costs.

EAP and PACOM will then approve those requests and coordinate appropriately to send the funds to posts via either a fund cite for civilians or a MIPR (Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request) for military officials in advance of the ISM-DR.

17. (U) POC, MEETING DOCUMENTS ACCESS, and REPORTING DEADLINE: The POC for any follow-up, questions, or reporting on host government reactions is EAP/RSP Kevin Sheives (sheiveskw@state.gov, 202-647-1217). Posts can access the electronic meeting documents for distribution to host government officials by visiting the EAP/RSP Intranet site for ARF matters at <http://eap.state.gov/EAPOffices/RSP/ARF.cfm>. Department requests posts report on host government reactions by August 26.

18. (U) Department appreciates posts' assistance.
CLINTON